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T R E A T I S E  
Concerning  
M A R R I A G E :  
WHEREIN  
THE UNLAWFULNESS  
OF  
MIXT MARRIAGES  
IS

Laid open from the SCRIPTURES.

Recommended to the YOUTH of BOTH SEXES  
among the People called QUAKERS.

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By MOSES WEST.

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THE FOURTH EDITION.

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To which are added,

The Excellent Advices on this Subject contained in the Yearly-Meeting Epistle of 1777.

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2 Cor. vi. 14. "Be ye not unequally yoked."

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# T R E A T I S E

Concerning

## M A R R I A G E.

**M**ARRIAGE is an Ordinance of God, instituted in Paradise in the Time of our first Parents, for their comfortable Abiding here, and leaving Posterity after them; and Men and Women have been the more happy therein, as they have had Regard to the Counfel of God, and his providential Hand, in choofing fuch as feared the Lord, and were true Worshippers of him, and avoiding thofe who were Idolaters, and fuch as feared not the true God.

And that in fuch their Caution, their Proceeding was agreeable to the

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Law

Law of God in the Heart, is very apparent ; for when the Will and Mind of God was committed to Writing, and promulgated to Israel, his peculiar People, Deuter. vii. 3, 4. speaking of the Nations who inhabited the promised Land, he said, “ Neither shalt thou make Marriages with them ; thy Daughter thou shalt not give unto his Son, nor his Daughter shalt thou take unto thy Son.” “ Because,” said the Lord, “ THEY WILL TURN AWAY THY SON FROM FOLLOWING ME.”

Now if this be the Consequence of such mixt Marriages, then such Marriages are still unlawful ; and the Law in Force that forbids them. But that the Consequence of such Marriages is still the same, I appeal not only to the Witness of God in all, but also unto sound Reason and true Experience.

Moreover, the Prohibition aforesaid was not intended against these Seven Nations only, but had a more general

general Extent ; for the Israelites were not allowed to take them Wives of the Daughters of Ashdod, of Ammon, or of Moab ; and, for the same Reason, not of any other People that were not circumcised, and made Partakers of the true Worship of God.

This appears from the Words of Nehemiah, Chap. xiii. 23, 24, 25. “ In those Days,” said he, “ also  
“ saw I Jews that had married Wives  
“ of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of  
“ Moab ; and their Children spake  
“ half in the Speech of Ashdod, and  
“ could not speak in the Jews Language. And I contended with  
“ them, and made them renew their  
“ Covenant with the Lord, saying,  
“ Ye shall not give your Daughters  
“ unto their Sons ; nor take their  
“ Daughters unto your Sons.” Adding, ver. 26, 27. “ Did not Solomon,  
“ King of Israel, sin by these Things ?  
“ Yet among many Nations was  
“ there no King like him, who was  
“ beloved of his God : Nevertheless,

“ even him did strange Women cause  
 “ to sin. Shall we then, said he,  
 “ hearken unto you to do all this  
 “ great Evil, to transgress against  
 “ our God, in marrying strange  
 “ Wives ?”

Thus, in short, we see how such Marriages are against the written Law of God, and the Practice of his faithful People.

But long before this Law was delivered in Writing, the holy Patriarchs, and such as feared and worshipped the true God, shewed a Dislike of such mixt Marriages, from the Sense of the Law written in their Hearts. And so long as they kept in the true Faith, and at a lawful Distance from such as were not Partakers thereof with them (which for some Time they did) the Lord was with them, and blessed them, and made them instrumental in his Hand for the withholding his Wrath from being presently poured out upon the  
 old

old World. But when they had generally departed from his Covenant, and from the Example of the Righteous, even in this particular Case, mark what followed.

“ It came to pass, when Men  
 “ began to multiply on the Face of  
 “ the Earth, and Daughters were  
 “ born unto them, that the Sons of  
 “ God saw the Daughters of Men,  
 “ that they were fair ; and they took  
 “ them Wives of all that they chose,”  
 Gen. vi. 1, 2. That is, they made  
 no Distinction upon the Account of  
 Faith and Religion : But to whom-  
 soever their fleshly Minds inclined,  
 them they took to Wife, (like the  
 dishonourable and unchristian Prac-  
 tice of some in our Day,) such who  
 were known and distinguished from  
 the Children of God, by the Name  
 of the Children of Men, being, in  
 the main of their Conversation, with-  
 out a godlike or religious Mark ;  
 And, it is said, “ God saw that the  
 “ Wickedness of Man was great in

“ the Earth, for the Earth was full  
 “ of Violence, and that forely grieved  
 “ the Spirit of the Lord ; so that he  
 “ said, I will destroy Man whom I  
 “ have created,” Gen. vi. 5. 7.

Now when Things were come to this Pass, the People of God having cast off his Yoke, and fallen in with the World and its Spirit (which they openly declared, by their entering into the nearest Affinity by Marriages with them) and had their Hearts thereby drawn away more and more from following the Lord, and “ all  
 “ Flesh having” by this Time “ corrupted his Way upon the Earth ;” then did the Lord determine to destroy all Flesh by a Flood, Noah and his Family only excepted.

If nothing more could be alleged against these mixt Marriages, this Consideration, one would think, were of itself enough to manifest how great a Sin it is, and to deter all considerate Men and Women from entering into it, that it appears to have  
 been

been a great Step towards the Destruction of the old World, the Door that gave the Inlet to those Corruptions and Violence which filled the Earth, and provoked the Lord, not only “to repent that he had made “Man,” but to pour down his Wrath in a Flood, which destroyed both Man and Beast.

We have seen the Mischief the Ungodly brought upon Mankind by those mixt Marriages before the Flood. Now let us observe the great Care the Godly took, after the Flood, to prevent the like Evil and Danger.

After the general Overthrow of ungodly Men by the Flood, from which only Noah with his Family, eight Souls in all, were preserved in the Ark (which was a Figure of Christ) was born Abraham, whom God called out of his own Country, and from his Father's House, with Sarah his Wife, to make of them a distinct and peculiar People to him-

self. And he established his Covenant with Abraham (and his Blessing upon his Seed) who saw Christ's Day, and was glad; and in the Faith thereof walked before the Lord with a perfect Heart: In which Faith also he offered up his Son Isaac unto the Lord, as the Lord had commanded him. Such was the Obedience he added unto his Faith; which "was  
 " accounted unto him for Righte-  
 " ousness," Gal. iii. 6.

Now when Isaac, the Child of Promise, was grown up to a marriageable Age, so great was the Care of his godly Father for him, that he might not be unequally yoked, or joined in Marriage, that calling his eldest Servant to him (who had the Charge and Oversight of all that he had) he made him swear by the Lord, the God of Heaven, and the God of the Earth, that he should "not take a  
 " Wife unto his Son of the Daugh-  
 " ters of the Canaanites, amongst  
 " whom he dwelt. But thou shalt  
 " go

“ go, said he, unto my Country,  
 “ and to my Kindred, and take a  
 “ Wife unto my Son Isaac,” Gen.  
 xxiv. 3, 4.

This so strict a Charge, so solemnly given, and so firmly bound, shews that this good Man did not look upon this Matter of mixt Marriages with an easy Eye, as an indifferent Thing; but was earnestly and heartily concerned, that his Son might not be joined with one of a different Worship: And as his honest Care was thus exercised, in sending his Servant to Abraham's Kindred, to the Family of Bethuel; so the providential Hand of God was apparently with him in the Choice of Rebekah, and the Consent they gave to it, saying, “ The Thing proceedeth of the Lord: Let her be thy Master's Son's Wife, as the Lord hath spoken.” And, in Conclusion, they blessed her, and sent her away. And as Isaac was walking, and meditating in the Fields at

Evening-tide, he met Rebekah coming with his Father's Servants, and took her to be his Wife: And she, after twenty Years Barrenness, bare him two Sons, Esau and Jacob; whose different Practice, in the Case of Marriage, let us now observe.

What Esau was, is well known, both by his selling of his Birth-right, and other Characters given him in the Holy Scriptures. When he was forty Years of Age, he took him two Wives, and both of them Unbelievers, Daughters of the Hittites; which Thing sorely grieved his godly Parents, and is left upon Record, as a Mark of his Undutifulness and Disobedience, in not advising with, and being ruled by them, in that so weighty Affair. And may it be a Caution unto all such as profess themselves to be Christians, and so of the righteous Line, "that they follow  
" not the Example of profane  
" Esau!"

But

But Esau's thus running out, from the Practice of the godly, to take him such Wives as his airy Mind led him to choofe, without Regard had to true Religion, fo fenfibly affected his good Mother Rebekah, that complaining to her Husband thereof, ſhe ſaid, “ I am weary of my Life, be-  
 “ cauſe of the Daughters of Heth :  
 “ If Jacob take a Wife” (as his Brother hath done) “ of the Daughters  
 “ of Heth, ſuch as theſe which are  
 “ of the Daughters of the Land,  
 “ what Good ſhall my Life do me ?”  
 Gen. xxvii. 46.

Good Iſaac thereupon, to prevent that Danger, calling his Son Jacob to him, gave him his Bleſſing, and with it this ſtrict Charge, “ Thou  
 “ ſhalt not take a Wife of the Daugh-  
 “ ters of Canaan. Arife, go to Pa-  
 “ dan-Aram, to the Houſe of Be-  
 “ thuel, thy Mother's Father, and  
 “ take thee a Wife from thence,”  
 Gen. xxviii. 1, 2.

Jacob,

Jacob, as became a dutiful Son, was obedient to his Parents herein : And the Lord was with him, and blessed him, and blessed his Family also, until they gave way to a Liberty not pleasing to the Lord.

Dinah, Jacob's only Daughter, was made an early Example of the Lord's Displeasure, by his suffering her to fall into Contempt, not only for her gratifying a vain Mind, in going out, through Curiosity, to see the Daughters of the Land, whereby she came to be ensnared and defiled by Shechem, Gen. xxxiv. 2. but also, as it appears, Jacob's Household were at that Time so far relapsed, that they had strange Gods among them, and, as may be gathered from the Text, strange Attire also ; which was to be changed and done away, before they might go up to the House of God, to worship him acceptably there, Gen. xxxv. 2, 3.

These

These Things might be likely to raise an Expectation in the Shechemites, that in Time they might draw them to become one People with them. Whereupon, having already got hold of one of Jacob's Family, they were desirous of a further Converse, in order to enter into Affinity with them; saying, "Make ye Marriages with us, and give your Daughters unto us, and take our Daughters unto you; and ye shall dwell with us," Gen. xxxiv. 9, 10. And, to entice them thereunto, they offered the Israelites what worldly Advantages soever they would ask, Ver. 12. Yea, they went so far, as to yield to take on them the Badge of Jacob's Religion, Ver. 24. but it was but for carnal and covetous Ends, Ver. 23. and succeeded to them accordingly. But the Truth of the Matter was, and is, that Jacob, the true Seed (the peculiar People of God) must live alone, and not be mixed, or numbered among the Nations. Wherefore, notwithstanding  
all

all the great Offers, and Importunity of Shechem (and the Condescension of the Shechemites) to have obtained Dinah for his Wife, Jacob would not hearken to him : For Israel, having an Eye to the Covenant of God, wherein he and his Family were comprehended, he zealously withstood the Temptation ; and thereby gave a Demonstration of his Faith. And when, soon after, the Lord commanded him to go up to Bethel, he called first for a Reformation in his Family. Whereupon it is said, “ They gave unto him all the strange “ Gods that were in their Hands, “ and all their Ear-rings that were “ in their Ears ;” which he hid under the Oak that was by Shechem. And then, having cleansed his Family from those heathenish Likenesses, both he and they were thenceforth at Quiet from such like Attempts by their unbelieving Neighbours.

Having a little touched upon Things relating to the Faith and Practice

Practice of the holy Patriarchs about these unlawful Marriages, and briefly set forth some of the pernicious Consequences that have always attended them both before and after the Flood, I shall now come nearer to the present State and Dispensation we are under.

When the Apostles spoke of this Ordinance of Marriage, they ran in the same Channel as all the Faithful had done before, saying, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with Unbelievers," &c. 2 Cor. vi. 14. And Peter's Exhortation and Care for the Married was, that they might be "Heirs together of the Grace of Life, that their Prayers might not be hindered," 1 Pet. iii. 7. Then such must be of the same Faith, and agree in Spirit, or else they cannot pray together acceptably, Mat. xviii. 19. "Can two walk together, unless they be agreed," said the Prophet Amos, Chap. iii. 3. Therefore such as are obliged to live and walk together

together for Term of Life, if they are not so agreed and united in Spirit, are like to have but little Comfort, Help, and Furtherance, if any, from each other in spiritual Things; which is the Way that leads to true and lasting Comfort for ever. For since without Faith, and an answerable Conversation, it is impossible to please God, such married Folks as differ in Faith, and disagree in their religious Conversations, are not like to please God, nor one another; but may rather expect the contrary, with much Confusion, which doth naturally attend such Mis-matchings in that Condition of Life.

Again, Paul to the Corinthians (1 Epist. vii. 39.) saith, "The Wife  
 " is bound by the Law as long as  
 " her Husband liveth: But if her  
 " Husband be dead, she is at Liberty  
 " to be married to whom she will;  
 " ONLY IN THE LORD." That is  
 ancient Limit.

But

But this gives no Liberty for such to marry as are near of Kin ; though otherwise duly qualified.

If any should object, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, married their near Kinswomen ; and thereupon should query, why it may not be as lawful for such Kindred now to marry, as it was for them then :

I answer, first, What they did in that Case then, was before the Law was given, which expressly forbids it, Levit. xviii.

Secondly, Every reasonable Man is capable of considering, that in those early Ages of the World there was a Necessity for it ; for Abraham, and those before mentioned of his Posterity, lived not very long after the Flood, which gave a kind of new Beginning to the World, with respect to its being again replenished with People. For Abraham was born before the Death of Shem, according to  
Scrip-

Scripture-Chronology, about One hundred and fifty Years; and yet Shem was an hundred Years old when the World was drowned.

Thirdly, It is to be considered, that People lived very long in those Days; so that Generations passed not away, nor did Kindred wear out so fast as afterwards; which exposed those Patriarchs to it, by a kind of unavoidable Necessity, and rendered it excusable in them. But there being no such Necessity now, nor any Reason of that Nature, to induce any to marry their near Kindred; they who do so, plainly break the positive Law of God, which expressly says, “None of you shall approach  
“to any that is near of Kin to him,”  
&c. Levit. xviii. 6. as also contrary to the Apostle’s Advice, Phil. iv. 8. as not being of good Report, &c.

That Marriage is an Ordinance of God, I have already asserted; and now add, by way of Explanation,  
that

that thereby two are made one, or inseparably joined together, for the Term of their joint Lives, by lawful Means; As first, in Spirit; Secondly, in Affection: And thirdly, in a solemn Covenant of Marriage, as well external and publick, as otherwise. These are the Conditions, more or less, of all those which the Lord joins together; whom no Man may put asunder. And without these Conditions, the Marriage Union is not perfectly enjoyed.

Now, whereas I press for an Agreement, and Unity of Faith, and religious Practices, in the Parties to be married, as essential to the Marriage which God makes; by Faith there, I mean that Faith, which the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles held, which the true Church now holdeth, and which upholdeth the true Church ("for by Faith ye stand," said the Apostle to the Church of old, 2 Cor. i. 24.) which is the one true Faith, mentioned by  
the

the same Apostle, in Ephes. iv. 5. And although there be in the World Faiths many, or at least different Apprehensions concerning Faith, and Pretences to it; yet, being inclined by the Law of Charity to conclude, that all who are serious do think their own particular Faith, Persuasion, and Way, to be the right (else they would not continue it); what I have here written may serve indifferently to all that profess Faith in Christ. And yet, though I do not here give a more particular Definition of Faith, it doth not thence follow, that I am indifferent therein, or in Doubt about it; no, but it is to avoid Controversy, and because I aim at Brevity, and choose rather to let the true Faith be manifested by its Fruits, which the Apostle James adviseth, Chap. ii. 18. Of which Fruits, what I here contend for is one, and not the least, to wit, That they who profess Faith in Christ Jesus, and are disposed to marry, are religiously obliged to take care, that  
they

they be not unequally yoked, by joining themselves in Marriage with any that are under different Persuasions and Practices, with respect to Faith and religious Worship, which may tend to hinder their persevering in it.

The Author to the Hebrews, in Chap. xi. treats at large of Faith ; and sets forth the noble Disposition of Mind that was in such as believed in Almighty God ; how it distinguished them from the World, and preserved them out of the Affections and Desires of being joined to and with the World. And in Ver. 24, 25. he says, “ By Faith, Moses, “ when he was come to Years, refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh’s Daughter ; choosing rather “ to suffer Affliction with the People “ of God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season.” He would not, it seems, be numbered with the Egyptians, who oppressed the  
the

the righteous Seed ; no, not for a Kingdom.

The Apostle also, in his Epistle to the Galatians, Chap. iv. giving a Hint at the Patriarchs Marriages, shews the Mystery of the spiritual Kindred, which is by Faith. And to the Ephesians, Chap. ii. 19. he saith, “ Now therefore, ye are no  
 “ more Strangers and Foreigners,  
 “ but Fellow - Citizens with the  
 “ Saints, and of the Household of  
 “ God. And in Gal. vi. 10. he calls Believers so ; and in Chap. iv. 28. says, “ Now we Brethren, as Isaac  
 “ was, are the Children of Pro-  
 “ mise.” For whom, say I, a spiritual Canaan is ordained by God.

Hereupon I would query ; Art thou, Reader, such an one ? One of the spiritual Kindred, a Child of Promise, and of the Household of Faith ? Or wouldst thou be so accounted, and art thou disposed to marry ? Whither then wilt thou go  
 for

for a Wife, but to thy Kindred ? In a spiritual or religious Relation : Which Relation in the Faith, as it was to them, is still to us, a necessary Qualification preceding Marriage.

If it be objected, that the People of England, and of that Part of the World called Christendom, and the Children of Israel, are not to be compared with each other, in this Case of Marriage ; for the Nations which Israel were forbidden to marry with, were Idolaters, worshipping strange Gods of their own devising ; but the People of England, &c. generally own the true God, and profess Faith in Jesus Christ ; so that, although they differ among themselves, about the Manner of worshipping God, yet why may they not marry promiscuously, one Sort with the other, seeing they all profess Christianity, and are therefore accounted and called Christians, both by themselves and other Nations, and

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being of a sober Conversation, cannot properly be called Unbelievers ?

Answer. I am not about to heathenize any, but am willing to own and embrace that which is good in all. And though I might oppose the Objection with a short Answer, in its own Terms, ‘ That such should  
 ‘ not intermarry, because they differ ;’ since the Nature of Marriage bespeaks an Agreement, not Difference, an harmonious Unity, not a jarring Discord ; yet, for the Sake of serious Inquirers, I am willing to enlarge a little upon this Part. I allow there is a Difference, in some Degree, between outward Israel, and the Nations then, and spiritual Israel, and other People now, that are not of the same Society and Communion ; for then the Distinction was only of Jew and Gentile, Believer and Unbeliever : But now (as the Objection hath it) all that Part which is called Christendom professeth Faith in one God, and in Christ Jesus, though  
 very

very differently; and some, no doubt, in all Professions called Christian, are of a sober moral Conversation. But if general Profession were a sufficient Qualification for joining such in Marriage without Exception, then Papists, and other unsound Worshipers, bearing the Christian Name, must not be excluded or refused, if of a sober Conversation; which Allowance would not a little uphold the apostate Church, called in the Revelation, 'Mystery-Babylon,' &c. Chap. xvii. 5. and tend to keep God's People there, contrary to the express Command of God, Jer. li. 6. and of the Voice from Heaven, which said, "Come out of her my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues," Rev. xviii. 4. For hath she not long made, and doth she not still make, a large Profession of Faith in God and Christ, after her Manner?

When the Apostle exhorted the Believers of old, "not to be une-  
B 2 "qually

“qually yoked together with Un-  
 “believers,” 2 Cor. vi. 14. may we  
 suppose he intended to restrain the  
 Prohibition only to those absolute  
 and notorious Unbelievers, who were  
 Pagans or Heathens? Or did it ex-  
 tend to all, that did not believe the  
 Manifestation of Christ outwardly in  
 the Flesh. The Jews did believe in  
 God, and that Christ, the Son of  
 God, should come; but they did  
 not believe in him as he was then  
 come, and manifested in the Flesh  
 among them. Might the Christian  
 Believers, notwithstanding that, have  
 mingled in Marriages with the un-  
 believing Jews, because of their ge-  
 neral Belief in God, and in Christ  
 to come, though they rejected him  
 in his then present Appearance?  
 Would that have been an equal  
 Yoking? If one that believes, not  
 only the outward Appearance of  
 Christ, with respect to his having  
 come in the Flesh; but his inward  
 Appearance also, with respect to his  
 being come in the Spirit, by his  
 divine

divine Light and Grace, to rule in the Hearts of his People, and thereby to direct and enable them, as they attend thereunto, how to perform divine Worship and Service to God, should marry one that denies and opposes that inward and spiritual Coming and Appearance of Christ in the Heart, and sticks only to his Belief of his outward Coming, and Appearance in the Flesh at Jerusalem : Would such a Couple be equally yoked ?

If two Persons of different Judgments about Matters of Faith and religious Exercises (as going to Places of Public Worship, Preaching, Praying, Thanksgiving, &c.) should incline to marry each other, presuming in their fond Affections, that notwithstanding that Disagreement, they may live comfortably together, they may find too late, that they were greatly mistaken. For although, if it were only a Disagreement in their Tempers, or natural Dispositions,

which concerned only their outward Conversation one towards the other, or the Management of their temporal Affairs, it might be hoped they might live tolerably together : Yet, where the Difference is of so high a Nature, as concerns the Peace of Conscience, and Safety of the Soul, on either Side, that cannot be reconciled, without the Conversion of one of them, which is out of Man's Power, of himself, to effect. Wherefore, although such may promise to themselves Unity in such Contrariety ; yet by that Time their Folly hath corrected them, they will find Cause to be of another Mind. And if their Love to God and Religion be not quite overcome by those Passions which engaged them into that unwarrantable Undertaking, they will feel, after Marriage, their Spirits more plainly and warmly conflicting one with another, and striving to bring each other into a Conformity unto that Way of Worship, which he or she is in. And then,  
which

which soever of them prevails, the other must lose Peace of Conscience (the greatest of all Losses) unless such Compliance spring from a true and unfeigned Conviction, that the Worship so conformed to, is the right; which is more than may reasonably be expected by any, who are guilty of tempting the Lord with such mixt Marriages.

When two of disagreeing Persuasions in religious Exercises join in Marriage, no Man can reasonably think that their Affection to each other is grounded on, or governed by, Religion; and if not, that it must be by some worldly End: And to cloke such a Marriage with a Pretence of Hope, to convert each other to what each believeth is right; is in plain English, no better than  
 “ sinning, that Grace may abound;  
 “ doing Evil, that Good may come  
 “ of it.”

But the Case is otherwise, where two of one and the same Persuasion in Religion, or of no Religion, are joined together in Marriage ; and afterwards one of them is converted to the true Religion : The Converted may expect the Lord's Blessing ; and abiding together, may be a Means of Sanctification and Good to the other, according to the Apostle's Doctrine, 1 Cor. vii. 14. and the Nature of true Christianity.

Now, as to the latter Part of the Objection, I readily grant that the Lord hath many, that in a Sense may be said to belong to him, who are not as yet professed Members of the visible Church, nor known unto it. This our Saviour plainly intimated, when, in his Discourse to the Jews, pointing at the Conversion of the Gentiles, he said, " Other Sheep I  
 " have, which are not of this Fold ;  
 " them also I must bring, and they  
 " shall hear my Voice ; and there  
 " shall be one Fold, and one Shep-  
 " herd,"

“herd,” John x. 16. But until these other Sheep are gathered, and brought by the great Shepherd into the Fold, although they are known to the Lord, yet are they not so known to his People, as to be capable of being admitted into Church-Communion, or Fellowship with them; much less into that Marriage-Union with them, of which we have been treating.

But to have done, at length, with this Objection, I shall now remind the Reader, that when the Sons of God, in the old World, had degenerated, and were apostatized, as hath been before observed, their Motive to these mixt Marriages was, “They saw the Daughters of Men, that they were fair, and they took them Wives of all that they chose,” Gen. vi. 2. So that to gratify the Lust of the Eye, was the Inducement to their Marriages. And to such an Eye now (as also to those as have a covetous Mind, reaching un-

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duly after the Things of this World) this may seem an unnecessary Scruple; especially, when it stands in their Way, to hinder them from obtaining their desired End. But the truly Conscientious will always find themselves obliged, for the Sake of Religion and Duty to God, to do nothing that may hinder their Perseverance and Progression therein: Which Disagreement about Religion will naturally do, more or less, according to the Proportion of the Difference.

Wherefore, though our Case be not the same, as old Israel's was, in every Degree; yet, if it be so in Degree, and have the same Tendency in Measure (which that it has, is undeniable) then it brings our Times under the Force of the Prohibition, and that for the same Reason, namely, Because "they will turn away thy Son from following me," saith the Lord, Gen. vi. 4.

And

And now, my dear Friends (for to you who bear the Name of Quakers, whether ye be such as the Lord hath been graciously pleased to call, and gather out of any other religious Professions, or such as are the Offspring of believing Parents in this Profession, do I now more particularly turn my Discourse) if ye would not be overtaken in that extremely hurtful Case of mixed Marriages, keep out of the Way that leads to it. Shun, as much as may be, the too frequent and familiar Converse with those of other Professions; such especially, as may be most likely to allure and draw your Minds out. Be not cold and indifferent about Religion. Halt not between two Opinions. “If God be God, follow “him,” and keep close with him, that you may know your Minds stayed and established upon him; and then will ye see, for your Encouragement, the Advantages and Comfort that such have and enjoy, who make it their Business to please him. And

whatever your Condition and Circumstances in this World be, let your chiefeſt Treasure and Pleaſure be in Heaven and heavenly Things ; and then your Hearts will be there alſo, as our Saviour taught, Mat. vi. 21. And, above all Things, ye will deſire to be Servants and Diſciples of him, who ſaid, “ Where I am, “ there ſhall alſo my Servant be,” John xii. 26.

But all whoſe Minds are ſet upon Things below, whether Pleaſures or Profits, more than upon their Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who died for them, “ are not worthy of him,” Mat. x. 37. And ſuch, whatever they may profeſs, do moſt frequently miſs of the heavenly Bleſſing (which God reſerves for his obedient People) notwithstanding they may partake largely of temporal Mercies and Bleſſings, in common with others. For God, who is the Fountain of Goodneſs, cauſeth his “ Sun to ſhine on the “ Evil, and on the Good, and ſend-  
“ eth

“ eth Rain on the Just, and on the  
 “ Unjust,” Mat. v. 45. But to be  
 a Disciple of Christ, and Heir of  
 the heavenly Kingdom, is a great  
 and glorious Privilege. The Way to  
 this Happiness is set forth, by him  
 who is the TRUTH itself, Luke xiv.  
 27. (and in many other Places of  
 Holy Scripture, in which it is ne-  
 cessary we should be very conversant)  
 “ Whosoever,” saith Christ, “ doth  
 “ not bear his Cross, and come after  
 “ me, cannot be my Disciple.” And  
 we read, 1 John iv. 10. that he is  
 not only “ the Propitiation for our  
 “ Sins ;” but also, that he hath  
 “ left us an Example, that we should  
 “ follow his Steps,” 1 Pet. ii. 21.  
 who said, “ Learn of me, for I am  
 “ meek and low in Heart ; and ye  
 “ shall find Rest unto your Souls,”  
 Mat. xi. 29.

And now, my Friends, I would  
 come near to you by way of Inquiry.  
 Have you indeed been convinced of  
 the Truth, and made sensible of the  
 Cross

Cross that attends the Profession of it? And have you been faithful to those Convictions, and followed the Lord in the Way of Regeneration? Or have ye not? This is an important Point, the Consequence of which may turn the Scale to either Hand; therefore, I pray, let it be duly considered: For to be found persevering in the Way of Truth, which we make Profession of, and in all the Parts and Branches of it, will be of a double Advantage to us. It will not only preserve from adding Sin to Sin (which, if not timely prevented, will lead such into spiritual Adultery, a departing from God, and withdrawing from him both their Love and Subjection; which, more or less, precedes such mixt antisciptural Marriages :) But it will also bring us to understand the Difference, which hath always been between the two Seeds; and that will tend greatly to preserve us from apostatizing. And then, what the Consequence is of Persevering in Well-

Well-doing unto the End, ye will be truly sensible of, to your everlasting Joy and Comfort; according as it is promised, Rev. iii. 21. “ To  
 “ him that overcometh will I grant  
 “ to sit with me in my Throne,  
 “ even as I also overcame, and am  
 “ set down with my Father in his  
 “ Throne,” where all Fears and Temptations will be done away for ever. But the Consequence of Disobedience will not be so; but will have a contrary Event: Which I pray God we all may be delivered from before it be too late.

“ Think not,” said John the Baptist to the professing Jews, Mat. iii. 9. “ to say within yourselves, We  
 “ have Abraham to our Father,” &c. A Thing they highly valued themselves upon; and upon their professing the true Religion, as being the Disciples of Moses: as if that could be any Advantage to them, while they did not the Works of Abraham, but lived in Disobedience:  
 So

So that, notwithstanding the great Advantages they had, and the high Pretences they made, our Saviour Christ told them plainly, “ They “ were of their Father the Devil ;” and his Proof thereof was, because they did his Works. So that to be the Children of faithful Parents, or to profess the true Religion now, as they then did, and yet not be faithful as the Parents were, nor live and walk in the true Religion they profess, will as little avail such now, as it did those Jews then.

How greatly doth it concern every one, to attend daily and diligently on him, in the Gift of his Grace ; and to hearken to and obey his Teachings thereby ! For “ God, who at “ sundry Times, and in divers Manners, spake in Time past unto the “ Fathers by the Prophets, hath in “ these last Days spoken unto us by “ his Son,” Heb. i. 1, 2 : And that in divers Manners also ; as immediately by his Spirit, instrumentally  
by

by his Ministers, as also in the Holy Scriptures, and by his many Providences. And “if” (as the Apostle argueth, Heb. xii. 25.) “they escaped not, who refused him that spake on Earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from Heaven.”

Extract

## Extract from the Yearly Meeting Epistle of 1777.

Dear Friends, amongst the many hurtful Things those are liable to, who live not in due Subjection to the Light of God's Holy Spirit in their own Consciences, let us revive in your View at this Time, that of mixing in Marriage with those of different Persuasions in Religion.

Marriage being a divine Ordinance, and a solemn Engagement for Term of Life, is of great Importance to our Peace and Well-being in this World, and may prove of no small Consequence respecting our State in that which is to come ; yet it is often too inconsiderately entered into, upon Motives inconsistent with the evident Intention of that unerring Wisdom by which it was primarily ordained ; which was for the mutual Affis-

Assistance and Comfort of both Sexes, that they might be Meet-Helps to each other, both in Spirituals and Temporals, and that their Endeavours might be united for the pious and proper Education of their Children, in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, and for suitably qualifying them to discharge their Duty in their various Allotments in the World.

Marriage implies Union and Concurrence, as well in spiritual as temporal Concerns. Whilst the Parties differ in Religion, they stand disunited in the main Point; even that which should increase and confirm their mutual Happiness, and render them Meet-Helps and Blessings to each other. Where it is otherwise, the reciprocal Obligation they have entered into becomes their Burden, and the more so, as it may not be of a short and transient Duration. Whatever Felicity they might expect or flatter themselves with in the Beginning

ginning, they have found themselves disappointed of, by the daily Uneasiness accompanying their Minds, and imbittering their Enjoyments.

The perplexed Situation of the Offspring of such Alliances is likewise to be lamented. Attached by Nature to both Parents, the Confusion they are in often renders them unfixed in Principle, and unsettled in Practice ; or if, as it is usual, the Sons go with the Father, and the Daughters with the Mother, Brothers and Sisters are trained up in Lines of Conduct diverse from, and, in some Cases, opposite to each other. Thus, differing in Principle, they are frequently divided in Affection, and, though so nearly related, are sometimes at the greatest Distance from that Love and Harmony which ought continually to subsist between them.

To prevent falling into these disagreeable and disorderly Engagements,

ments, it is requisite to beware of the Paths that lead to them—the fordid Interests, and ensnaring Friendships of the World, the contaminating Pleasures and idle Pastimes of earthly Minds; also the various Solicitations and Incentives to Festivity and Dissipation. Let them likewise especially avoid too frequent and too familiar Converse with those from whom may arise a Danger of Entanglement, by their alluring the Passions, and drawing the Affections after them.

For Want of due Watchfulness, and Obedience to the Convictions of Divine Grace in their Consciences, many amongst us, as well as others, have wounded their own Souls, distressed their Friends, injured their Families, and done great Disservice to the Church, by these unequal Connections; which have proved an Inlet to much Degeneracy, and mournfully affected the Minds of  
those

those who labour under a living  
Concern for the Good of all, and  
the Prosperity of Truth upon  
Earth.



F I N I S.

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